

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 remain pending. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The specification and claims were objected to as difficult to read due to insufficient spacing. A substitute specification with claims as filed is attached hereto.

The claims were objected to as difficult to read due to insufficient spacing. A substitute set of claims is attached hereto.

Claims 20 and 21 were objected to and were amended in accordance with the Examiner's recommendation.

Claims 1-6, 8-11 and 14-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Kramer et al (USPN 6,725,548) in view of Huggins (USPN 6,533,291).

Independent claim 1 specifically calls for the aperture of the rotatable sleeve to be rotationally manipulatable between a position in which the aperture is aligned with the blade receiving slot for receiving a blade and a position in which the aperture is non-aligned with blade receiving slot to define a clamping configuration. In stark contrast thereto, while the rotatable sleeve (59) of Kramer has a "hole" formed therein, such hole is circular (see Fig. 15) thereby positively precluding its manipulation between positions in which the hole is "aligned" and "non-aligned" with the blade receiving slot (62). Huggins similarly fails to suggest a configuration in which the aperture on a rotatable sleeve is rotationally manipulatable between aligned and non-aligned positions. As such, the rotatable sleeve of such devices is incapable of directly engaging the blade and therefore incapable of playing a active role in its the retention as per the interaction of the blade projections (reference numeral 20, FIG. 2) with the interior surface of the sleeve (FIGS. 6 and 7). It is respectfully submitted that no such structure or function is suggested by either of the cited references alone or in combination and that therefore obviousness is effectively avoided.

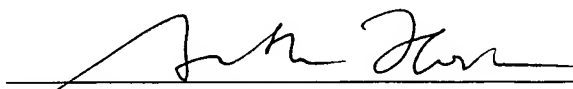
Independent claim 21 specifically calls for a locking member to be pivotally connected to the blade carrier within a radially and axially extending groove formed therein. The locking member (50) of Kramer is neither pivotally connected to the blade carrier (60) nor is it disposed in a groove as it appears to be slidably received in a hole (see e.g. FIGS. 1, 6 and 7). As such, a very different mechanism is relied upon to retain the blade wherein the mechanism of the present invention obviates the need for a hole in the blade. The chuck of Huggins appears incapable of retaining a **blade** with or without a hole formed therein. In view of the different function and capabilities that are afforded by the claimed structure, it is respectfully submitted that obviousness is precluded.

Claims 7, 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Kramer in view of Phillips et al (USPN 5,575,071). In view of the non-obviousness of the underlying independent claim 1 as was argued above, it is respectfully that all claims depending therefrom similarly avoid obviousness.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicant earnestly believes the application to be in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that it be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

FULWIDER PATTON LLP

By: 
Gunther O. Hanke
Registration No. 32,989

GOH:spc/rmk
200 Oceangate, Suite 1550
Long Beach, CA 90802
Telephone: (562) 432-0453
Facsimile: (562) 435-6014
Customer No. 27629
31105.1